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Economic Survey of the Village of Duches
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ECONOMIC SURVEY

OF THE

Village of Duchess

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF ~~ECONOMIC AFFAIRS~~ Industry

GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

HON. A. J. HOOKE
MINISTER

RALPH R. MOORE
DEPUTY MINISTER

ECONOMIC SURVEY

V I L L A G E O F D U C H E S S

by

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

This survey was compiled with the assistance of village officials, Board of Trade and citizens who were familiar with the history of the village.

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1950

Revised July, 1953

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VILLAGE OF DUCHESS

1. LOCATION

Southeast quarter of Section 32 and the northeast quarter of Section 29-20-14-W4 in Census Division No. 3. This location is 125 miles southeast of Calgary on Highway No. 36 and on the Canadian Pacific Railway line.

2. ALTITUDE

2,479 feet Latitude 50/44 Longitude 111/54

3. TEMPERATURE

Mean summer temperature	59°F.
Mean winter temperature	25°F.
Mean annual temperature	39°F.

Note: The foregoing is estimated from the nearest weather station and covers a 20-year average.

4. RAINFALL

Mean annual rainfall	9.72 inches
Mean annual snowfall	38.5 inches
Mean annual total precipitation	13.57 inches

Note: The foregoing is estimated from the nearest weather station and covers a 20-year average.

5. GEOLOGY

Bedrock of this area is a dark gray marine shale which is assigned to the Bearpaw formation of Upper Cretaceous Age. These shales contain some bentonitic material and comparatively large quantities of salts. This latter feature makes the Bearpaw generally unsuitable as a water horizon.

6. SOIL

Duchess is in the Brown soil zone.

Profile - In the normal profile the surface horizon is about five inches deep and brown in color. The lower horizon is commonly brownish in color and lime is found at depths averaging 15 inches below the surface. The parent material is found at depths of 20 to 24 inches. In the other zones this horizon occurs at greater depths.

Fertility - Moisture is the principal limiting factor in crop production. Soils in this zone are relatively low in nitrogen and under irrigation often respond to phosphorus fertilizers.

Vegetation - Short grass prairie.

Land Use - Only the most favorable soil type can be considered arable. Most of the area is desirable for ranching. Where farmed, wheat is the principal crop grown. Cropping practices must provide for moisture conservation and control of soil drifting. The long frost-free period makes this zone an excellent area for the development of irrigation.

7. HISTORY

Duchess was named in 1911 for the Duchess of Sutherland, wife of the fourth Duke of Sutherland who had acquired an extensive farm at Brooks, Alberta.

The history of the village was molded by such names as S. B. and H. B. Ramer, R. Welsh, J. H. Brubaker, W. B. Smith, R. McDonald, W. Lauver, M. A. Adams, L. P. Larsen, J. A. Larsen, J. Svenson, A. Dahl, J. Hansen and L. Lendrum. There was also John Ware, a negro, who established the John Ranch at Duchess shortly after the turn of the century. His hospitality and generosity soon spread his ranch's fame far and wide.

Duchess' first church was Mennonite, the first resident minister being H. B. Ramer. W. B. Smith operated the first machine shop and garage, and Chester Marshall established a general store to serve the district.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Adams had the distinction of being the first white child born in Duchess. She later married Karl Kraus, a prominent farmer in the district. Duchess' first wedding was that of Miss May Stafford to Jack Hale.

With the coming of the railroad in 1914 and the completion of irrigation in 1915, the settlement of the district was pretty well complete. These settlers were predominately Mennonite and Lutheran, who had emigrated from Pennsylvania, Kansas and Colorado, U.S.A. Many of them have moved on to other districts, but of the old-timers such names remain as Brubaker, Ramer, Hansen, Lauver and Dahl.

In 1918 Duchess built a school. The first teacher was a Miss Williams. William Galloway was appointed as the first postmaster in the district.

Duchess was incorporated a village on May 12, 1921, with S. B. Ramer as reeve.

At one time Duchess had a branch of the Royal Bank of Canada, a creamery and two lumber yards.

The village now is typical of the small communities in the eastern irrigation district and the surrounding farms are exemplary of the diversified agricultural products which can be produced. All types of grains, grass seeds, fruits, vegetables and even honey are produced. The raising of cattle and other stock is also of importance in the district. Duchess is an important feeder point for fattening cattle.

In 1942, a vegetable cellar was constructed in Duchess. It holds 126 carloads of vegetables, and the temperature does not vary more than three or four degrees at any time. The temperature is controlled at a point between 39°F. and 43°F. which preserves vegetables for a year.

Another step in the progress of the village was the hay and alfalfa mill opened in 1945. A great deal of feed from the district is now shipped through this mill.

8. LIVING CONDITIONS

There are between 40 and 50 houses in the village of Duchess, about 90 per cent of them owner-occupied. The average rent for a home with all utilities is $25 per month.

New buildings constructed during 1948 - 4
New buildings constructed during 1949 - 4
New buildings constructed during 1952 - 1

Schools provide courses in grades one to 10, including such vocational training subjects as typing, bookkeeping, art and music.

Duchess is surrounded by irrigation canals which are necessary for the cultivation of the district. Lake Newell, 37 miles southwest of Duchess, is a popular summer resort for residents of the village. Good fishing, boating and swimming is found there. The Duchess district is an excellent bird-hunting district in the fall, and is especially famed for its fine pheasant country.

9. ADMINISTRATION

The village is governed by a mayor selected from the council for a one-year term, and two councillors, one elected each year for a three-year term. The secretary-treasurer carries out the policy set by the council.

10. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

All new buildings, repairs to buildings, or removal of buildings must be approved by the council before a permit is issued.

The Electrical Code conforms to the requirements of the Alberta Electrical Protection Act.

The Sanitary Regulations conform to the Alberta Public Health Regulations.

11. FIRE PROTECTION

The fire department consists of a volunteer fire chief and eight volunteer firemen.

Equipment: Two hand-drawn chemical engines.

12. TAX STRUCTURE

	1953 Net Assessment
Land, 100% of fair value	$ 14,990
Improvements, 100% of value	133,283
Total assessment	$148,273

Mill Rate:

School	Municipal	Hospital	Total
53	34	8	95 mills

13. AREAS

Area of village	87.04 acres
Streets and lanes	18.11 acres
Public parks	6.5 acres

Miles of roads, streets and lanes:

	Gravel	Unpaved	Unopened	Total
Provincial main	1			1
Streets and lanes	3		1	4
Lanes and alleys		1	.5	1.5
		Total		6.5

There are 1.25 miles of cement, cinder and board sidewalks in the village.

14. SEWER AND WATER MAIN MILEAGE

Nil

15. POWER

Three phase, 60-cycle power is supplied under a ten-year franchise by the Calgary Power Co. Ltd.

Rates:

Domestic: Available only for lighting, heating, cooking, domestic power and ordinary uses in private houses and apartments used exclusively for residential purposes.

First 20 KWH's (or less) per month $3.10 gross minimum. Subject to 30¢ prompt payment discount, making $2.80 net minimum.
All over 20 KWH's used per month, 1.5¢ net per KWH

Note: Discount of 30¢ applies on all bills paid within discount period.

The foregoing rate applies where the maximum demand does not exceed five kilowatts. Where the demand exceeds five kilowatts an additional monthly demand charge of 50¢ per kilowatt is made.
Connection charge for new customers $1.00
Reconnection charge $5.60

Commercial Service: Available where other rates listed do not apply.

Service Charge

First 500 watts of installed capacity $1.20 per month
Each additional 250 watts of installed capacity 3¢ per month

Energy Charge

First 50 KWH's per month per KW of installation 10¢ per KWH.
Next 150 KWH's per month per KW of installation 5¢ per KWH.
Each additional 200 KWH's per month per KW of installation 2½¢ per KWH.
Discount: 10% if paid within discount period - based on the even dollars only of total bill, with a minimum discount of 30¢.
Minimum charge $2.30 gross $2.00 net per month
Minimum deposit $4.60
Reconnection charge $4.00

Power Service

(AC) Available for motors, rectifiers, commercial heating apparatus, etc., in commercial establishments.

Service charge

$1.00 per month per kilovolt-ampere (KVA) of installation (One motor horsepower or one kilowatt in heating apparatus is equivalent to one KVA)

Energy Charge

First 50 KWH's per month per KVA of installation 5¢ per KWH.
Next 50 KWH's per month per KVA of installation 3 1/3¢ per KWH.
Over 100 KWH's per month per KVA of installation 1 2/3¢ per KWH.
Discount: 10% if paid within discount period - based on even dollars only of total bill, with a minimum of 30¢ discount.
Minimum charge: $3.30 gross $3.00 net per month
Minimum deposit: $2.00 per h.p. with a minimum of $6.00
Reconnection charge $6.00

16. WATER

Drinking water is trucked into the village from Brooks, and other water is secured from irrigation ditches.

Water Analysis
Unobtainable

17. FUELS

Gas - nil

18. L. P. GAS

Heat value 2,521 b.t.u.'s per cu. ft. at 60°F.
100 lb. cylinders $7.50
There is no bulk storage tank in the village.

19. DIESEL FUEL

Heat value 135,000 to 140,000 b.t.u.'s per gallon at 60°F.
Domestic 16.4¢ (plus one cent tax) per gallon
Summer grade 17.3¢ (plus one cent tax) per gallon
Winter grade 17.3¢ (plus one cent tax) per gallon
Storage capacity 13,000 gallons.

20. COAL

Coal is secured from Drumheller and Bow City fields.

Rates, per ton

	Stoker	Egg	Lump
Drumheller	8.50	10.50	12.75
Bow City	7.95	9.75	11.50

21. LOCAL RESOURCES

Cereals
Dairy products
Honey
Horses, cattle, sheep and hogs
Poultry and eggs
Straw
Vegetables
Fruit

22 GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND SERVICES

Federal
Post Office

Provincial
Alberta Government Telephones

Municipal
Town office
Secretary-Treasurer
Part-time utility man
Committee rooms
Fire hall

23. HEALTH SERVICES

Medicine Hat Health Unit #1

24. PROFESSIONAL AND SKILLED SERVICES

Type of Service	No. of Establishments
Auditors and Public Accountants	1

25. TRANSPORTATION

Canadian Pacific Railway branch line Bassano to Empress via Duchess
Local freight hauling to and from Calgary and Medicine Hat daily.

26. NEWSPAPERS

Nil

27. COMMUNICATIONS

Canadian Pacific Telegraphs
Alberta Government Telephones
Post office
Air mail through post office
Nearest radio station Medicine Hat, CHAT

28. FINANCIAL FACILITIES

Treasury Branch sub-agency

29. HOTELS

	No. of Rooms	Single rate	Licensed
Duchess	14	$1.50 up	yes

30. TOURIST CAMPS

Nil

31. CHURCHES

Roman Catholic
United
Mennonite
Lutheran

32. LODGES

Nil

33. SERVICE CLUBS

Board of Trade

34. SOCIETIES

Home and School Association

35. EDUCATION

There is one school building with four rooms, four teachers and 115 pupils. Grades one to 10 inclusive, are taught, along with vocational subjects such as typing, bookkeeping, art and music. Two school vans bring the rural pupils into the village.

36. THEATRES AND HALLS

	Capacity	Stage	Piano
Community	400	yes	yes

37. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Nil

38. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Boys	Girls
Wolf Cubs	Brownies
Calf Club	Calf Club

39. SPORTS

Hockey, baseball, softball, curling

Covered curling rink with two sheets of natural ice.
Open air skating and hockey rink.
School grounds for sports.

40. FAIRS

Sports Day

41. HISTORIC SITES

Nil

42. CO-OPERATIVES

Alberta Wheat Pool
Eastern Irrigation District

43. INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

Type of Industry or Business	No. Establishments	Producer or Mfgtr.	Wholesale	Retail
Auto body and repairs	1	-	-	1
Butchers	1	-	1	1
Building contractors	2	-	-	-
Blacksmith	2	-	-	-
Cartage delivery	1	-	-	-
Confectionery	1	-	-	1
Coal dealers	2	-	-	2
Department store	2	-	-	2
Electrical appliances	2	-	-	2
Electrical contractors	2	-	-	-
Furniture store	1	-	-	1
Garage and service stn.	5	-	-	5
Grain elevators	2 - Total capacity 130,000 bushels			
Hardware	1	-	-	1
Hotel	1	-	-	-
Implements	3	-	-	3
Insurance and real estate	1	-	-	-
Lumber yards	1	-	1	1
Mail order office	1	-	-	1
Milk distributors	2	2	2	2
Oil distributors	3	-	3	-
Painters and decorators	2	-	-	-
Pool rooms	1	-	-	-
Propane gas distribtrs.	1	-	-	-
Radio repair	2	-	-	-
Restaurants	1	-	-	-
Welding and machine shop	1	1	1	-
Woodworking	2	2	2	-
Alfalfa mill	1	1	1	-
Vegetable root cellar	1	1	1	-

44. SITES

Duchess can offer excellent industrial sites that are serviced with power, trackage and highway facilities.

45. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

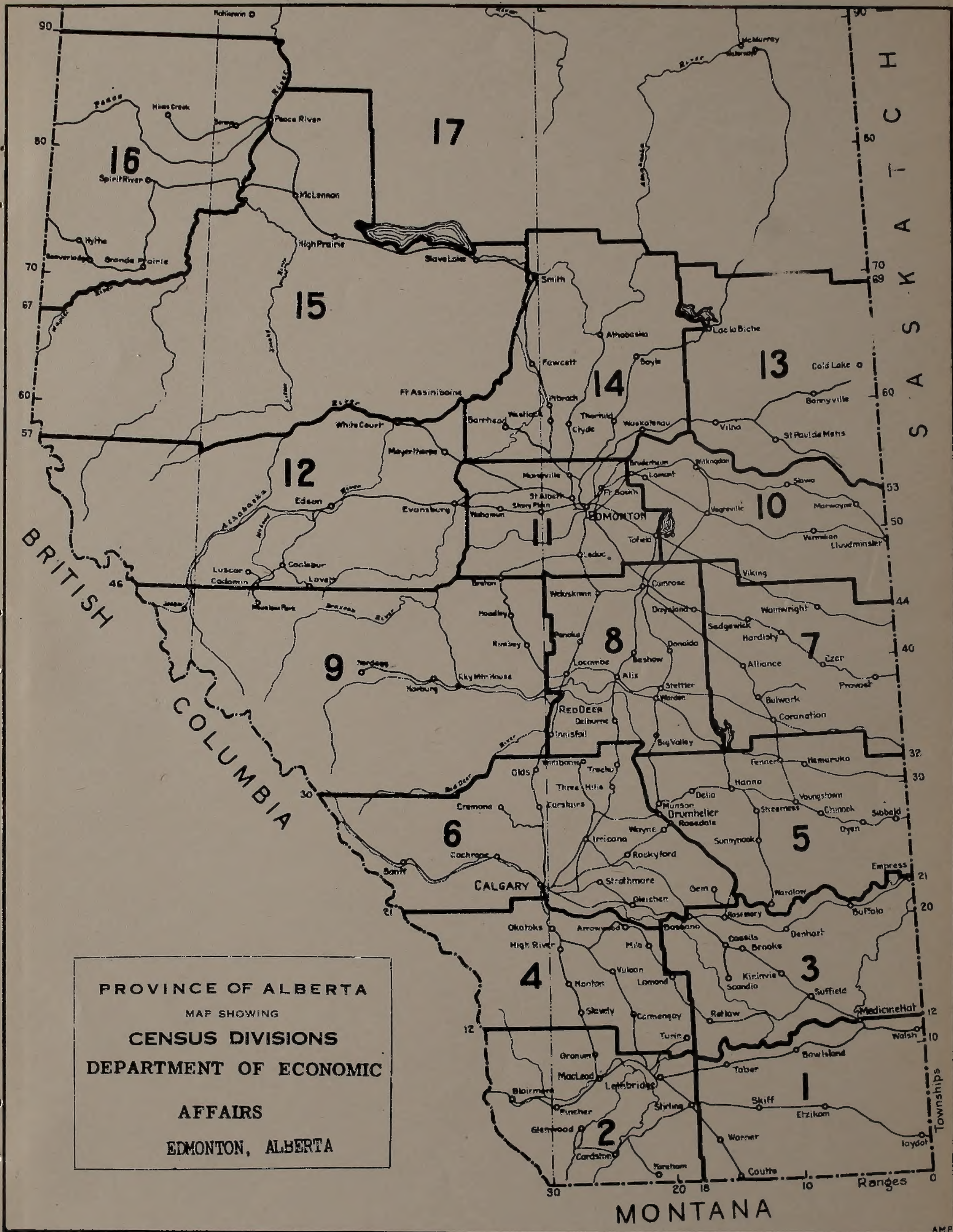
Duchess could support a shoe repair business, cold storage locker, doctor, hairdresser and barber - or any other industry that could use the district's natural resources.

46. TRADING AREA

On the north for 15 miles, west for 7 miles, south 4 miles, and east for 7 miles.

47. POPULATION

Trading area population	1,223	1951 census
Village population	258	1951 census
Village population at Dec. 31, 1952	263	count


PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
MAP SHOWING
CENSUS DIVISIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS
EDMONTON, ALBERTA
BRITISH COLUMBIA
SASKATCH
MONTANA
Townships
Ranges
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
Peace River
McLennan
Spirit River
Hythe
Grande Prairie
High Prairie
Slave Lake
Smith
Athabaska
Lac la Biche
Cold Lake
Bonnyville
St Paul de Metis
Vilna
Boyle
Fawcett
Pibroch
Barrhead
Westlock
Clyde
Waskatenau
Ft Assiniboine
White Court
Mayerthorpe
Edson
Evansburg
St Albert
Ft Sask.
EDMONTON
Lamont
Vegreville
Tofield
Vermilion
Lloydminster
Leduc
Luscar
Cadomin
Coalspur
Lovett
Jasper
Breton
Camrose
Viking
Wainwright
Daysland
Sedgewick
Hardisty
Czar
Provost
Alliance
Bulwark
Coronation
Wetaskiwin
Ponoka
Lacombe
Bashaw
Donalda
Alix
Stettler
Rimbey
Nordegg
Rky Mtn House
RED DEER
Innisfail
Big Valley
Olds
Three Hills
Carstairs
Cremona
Trochu
Hanna
Delia
Munson
Drumheller
Rosedale
Youngstown
Chinook
Oyen
Sibbald
Irricana
Rockyford
Wayne
Sunnynook
Cochrane
Banff
CALGARY
Strathmore
Gleichen
Gem
Empress
Buffalo
Bassano
Denhart
Cassils
Brooks
Okotoks
High River
Milo
Vulcan
Nanton
Lomond
Kininvie
Scandia
Suffield
Stavely
Carmangay
Retlaw
Medicine Hat
Walsh
Champion
Turin
Bow Island
Granum
MacLeod
Lethbridge
Taber
Blairmore
Pincher
Stirling
Skiff
Etzikom
Glenwood
Cardston
Warner
Foremost
Coutts
Manyberries
Aden
AMP